

**State Board of Education  
November 17, 2009  
Item G**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Montpelier, Vermont**

**TEAM:** Commissioner's Office

**ITEM:** Will the State Board vote to authorize a study of the advisability of re-grouping the supervisory union/district structure of which the Essex Town Supervisory District is a part?

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** That the State Board vote to authorize a study of the advisability of re-grouping the supervisory union/district structure of which the Essex Town Supervisory District is a part.

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** 16 V.S.A. §§ 241(a) and 261(a), Rule 3232.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** The above-named supervisory district has informed the Commissioner of an impending vacancy in its superintendency (see attached letters). Under Rule 3232 of the Vermont State Board of Education Manual of Rules and Practices, a supervisory union or district may not begin recruitment for a new superintendent until notification by the Commissioner that the supervisory union or district is not under State Board consideration for a supervisory union change. Given the current economic situation and discussions regarding potential consolidation of Vermont's education governance structure, the Commissioner recommends a study on whether a merger with a neighboring supervisory union or district would be practical. The Commissioner proposes to bring back to the State Board at its December 15<sup>th</sup> meeting his recommendations as to whether any supervisory union change is warranted.

**COST IMPLICATIONS:** To be determined.

**STAFF AVAILABLE:** Armando Vilaseca, Commissioner; Mark Oettinger, General Counsel.



**ESSEX TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Superintendent's Office**

58 Founders Road  
Essex Jct., VT 05452  
802-878-8168  
802-878-5190 (FAX)

James M. Fitzpatrick  
Superintendent

Ellen A. Thompson, Ed.D.  
Instruction & Information  
Services

Terence Keating, Director  
Student Support Services

Roger George, Director  
Business & Financial Affairs

**Essex Elementary  
School**

1 Bixby Hill Road  
Essex Jct., VT 05452

Greg Marino, Principal  
Elizabeth Bonesteel, Asst. Prin.  
802-878-2584  
802-879-0602 (FAX)

**Founders Memorial  
School**

33 Founders Road  
Essex Jct., VT 05452

Kathy Barwin, Principal  
Peter Farrell, Asst. Prin.  
802-879-6326  
802-879-6139 (FAX)

**Essex Middle  
School**

60 Founders Road  
Essex Jct., VT 05452

Ned Kirsch, Principal  
Kevin Briggs, Asst. Prin.  
802-879-7173  
802-879-1363 (FAX)

**The Edge Academy**

60 Founders Road  
Essex Jct., VT 05452

Ned Kirsch, Co-Principal  
Ellen A. Thompson, Ed.D., Co-Principal  
802-879-7173  
802-879-1363 (FAX)

October 26, 2009

Armando Vilaseca, Commissioner  
Vermont Department of Education  
120 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

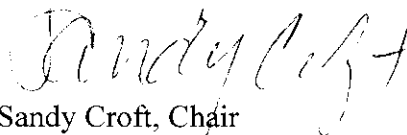
Dear Armando:

I believe you know that Essex Town School District's Superintendent of Schools, James M. Fitzpatrick, will retire at the end of the 2009-10 school year.

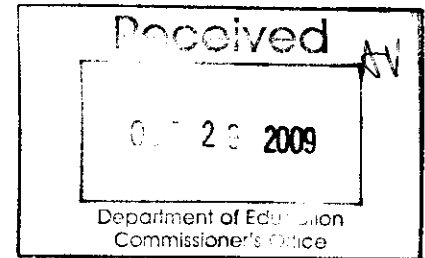
It's my understanding that, in my role as School Board Chair, I need to seek permission from you to fill the vacant position. The Essex School Board, with help from the VSBA, is prepared to conduct a national search for an outstanding candidate. Mr. Fitzpatrick has moved the District forward particularly in the areas of technology, policy governance and the creation of The Edge Academy. We hope to hire a superintendent who will continue these endeavors and help us prepare Essex students for a bright future.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future. Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Sandy Croft, Chair  
Essex Town School Board

I am





**State of Vermont**  
Department of Education  
120 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

November 4, 2004

Sandy Croft, Chair  
Essex Town School Board  
58 Founders Road  
Essex Junction, VT 05452

Dear Sandy:

Thank you for your letter of October 26, 2009, regarding the impending superintendent vacancy in the Essex Town School District.

Under 16 V.S.A. §261(a) and Rule 3232.2 of the Vermont State Board of Education *Manual of Rules and Practices*, I have the option of recommending to the State Board, at its November 17, 2009 meeting, that the Essex Town School District be considered for a supervisory union change. Since I am scheduled to meet with the Essex Town Board on Monday evening, November 9, I do plan to discuss possible options at that time. Following that discussion, I will let you know of my final decision as whether to recommend to the Board such consideration.

In the meantime, I would ask that you hold on any further steps in the recruitment process.

Sincerely,

Armando Vilaseca, Commissioner

C: James Fitzpatrick, Superintendent of Schools  
Fayneese Miller, Chair, State Board of Education  
Mark Oettinger, General Counsel  
Rae Ann Knopf, Deputy Commissioner  
Wm. Talbott, Chief Financial Officer  
Carol King, State Board Administrator